

Message Text

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51

ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMCONSUL ZAGREB

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2623

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ZAGREB 0715

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR, PINT, YO

SUBJECT: SPLIT MILITARY COURT INVESTIGATING DEFERMENTS OF
"HAJDUK" SOCCER STARS

REF: A. WILSON/GILMORE LETTER 1/16/74;

B. ZAGREB A-148, 10/13/70

1. HAVE IT ON GOOD AUTHORITY THAT ONGOING BUT SO FAR UN-PUBLICIZED INVESTIGATION BY SPLIT DISTRICT MILITARY COURT BECOMING SUBJECT MUCH LOCAL DISCUSSION. INVESTIGATION REPORTEDLY CONCERNS MEDICAL CERTIFICATES GIVEN SOME OF "HAJDUK" SOCCER STARS BY SPLIT DOCTORS STATING PLAYERS UNFIT FOR MILITARY SERVICE. MILITARY MAY ISSUE PRESS RELEASE ON SUBJECT IN COMING DAYS.

2. COMMENT: "HAJDUK" TEAM GREAT FAVORITE AND IMPORTANT INSTITUTION IN SPLIT AND DALMATIA. "HAJDUK" TOGETHER WITH ZAGREB'S "DINAMO" TEAM HAVE IMPORTANT CROATIAN CONNOTATION AS WELL. BOTH, FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE HAD CROATIA'S RED AND WHITE CHECKERBOARD AS PART OF TEAM EMBLEMS. PREDICTABLY, THERE IS PRIVATE COMMENT THAT ONGOING INVESTIGATION BEGAN AT INSTIGATION "ZVEZDARI," I.E. SUPPORTERS OF BELGRADE'S "CRVENA ZVEZDA" ("RED STAR") TEAM. THIS CONNECTION, DISGRUNTLEMENT AT BELGRADE STADIUM IN NOVEMBER 1973 WHEN "HAJDUK" BEAT "CVRENA
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ZVEZDA" IN FINAL YUGOSLAVIA'S FOOTBALL CUP MAY BE RECALLED

(REF A). ADDITIONALLY, THERE WAS RIOT IN SPLIT IN 1970 AFTER
REFEREE MADE UNPOPULAR DECISION IN FAVOR BELGRADE TEAM (REF B).

3. WHILE INVESTIGATION MAY WELL CONCERN IRREGULARITY,
CASE COULD INVOLVE PUBLIC EMOTIONS BEFORE DUST SETTLES.
WILSON

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